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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/751,489	12/28/2000	James A. Salomon	F-153	3235
919	7590	05/16/2003		
PITNEY BOWES INC. 35 WATERVIEW DRIVE P.O. BOX 3000 MSC 26-22 SHELTON, CT 06484-8000			EXAMINER	
			COLILLA, DANIEL JAMES	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2854	14

DATE MAILED: 05/16/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/751,489	SALOMON ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Dan Colilla	2854	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 March 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on 20 June 2002 is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . 6) Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in-

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

2. Claims 1, 4-6 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Magee.

With respect to claim 1, Magee discloses a double belt transport system having an upstream end and a downstream end and an upper belt 18a and a lower belt 16a as shown in Figure 2 of Magee. The upstream belt has a straight section between rollers 28 and 30. The lower belt has an intake section below roller 24 and the belt extends beyond both ends of the upper belt 18a. the upper belt 18a and the lower belt 16a form a soft wedge shaped ingest nip for transporting articles to be printed. The straight section of the upper belt forms a registration plane for the print head 34.

With respect to claim 4, Magee discloses upstream and downstream rollers 28 and 30 respectively. These rollers define a tangent plane that is parallel to the registration plane and they press against the belt 18a defining the straight section of the belt 18a.

With respect to claims 5, Magee discloses a deck 12 which has an upstream portion adjacent to the ingest nip and which supports articles to be printed as they enter the ingest nip.

With respect to claim 6, Magee discloses motor 20 for driving the belts 16a and 18a.

With respect to claim 8, Magee discloses a conventional ink jet head 34 which, being conventional, would have more than one nozzle for printing.

3. Claims 9-16 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Coudray et al.

With respect to claim 9, Coudray et al. discloses the method of providing a double belt transport system for moving a mailpiece including a print head 34, an upper looping belt 9 and a lower looping belt 10. The belts form a straight section between rollers 12 and 16 such that they define a registration plane for print head 34 as shown in Figure 4 of Coudray et al. A soft wedge shaped ingest nip is formed by a lower belt from roller 18 to the straight section as shown in Figure 4. Since rollers press the lower belt upwards against the mailpiece 2 and the upper belt 9, a normal force is applied between the mailpiece 2 and the upper belt 9. Friction is inherent in contact between any surfaces. Coudray et al. further discloses that a straight section of the upper belt 9 above the mail intake section of the lower belt 10 form the ingest nip as shown in Figure 4 of Coudray et al.

With respect to claim 12, Coudray et al. discloses a lifting mechanism 19-26 as shown in Figure 4.

With respect to claim 13, Coudray et al. discloses a reference surface 35 which faces the lifting mechanism such that the mailpiece is urged against it in the printing area (col. 6, lines 5-8).

With respect to claim 14, Coudray et al. discloses pulleys 19 and 22 which define a tangent plane parallel to the registration plane and press against the upper belt 10 through the lower belt 9.

With respect to claim 15, Coudray et al. discloses a deck 7 which supports the mailpiece 2 as it enters the ingest nip.

With respect to claim 16, Coudray et al. discloses motor 17 for driving belts 9 and 10 at the same speed so shearing forces are reduced (col. 4, lines 53-67).

With respect to claim 10, the lifting mechanism 19-26 urges the mailpiece 2 towards the straight section of the upper belt 9.

With respect to claim 11, Coudray et al. discloses a printer (*note print head 34*) with the double belt transport system as mentioned in the above rejection of claim 9, and a soft wedge shaped ingest nip as mentioned in the above rejection of claim 9.

With respect to claims 18-20, Coudray et al. discloses a tensioning idler 19 for the lower belt 10 and the method of using the idler 19 as shown in Figure 4 and disclosed in col. 4, lines 24-36) of Coudray et al.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 2-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Magee in view of Coudray et al.

With respect to claim 2, Magee discloses the claimed double belt transport system except for the lifting mechanism. However, Coudray et al. teaches a lifting mechanism 19-26 as shown in Figure 4. It would have been obvious to combine the teaching of Coudray et al. with the double belt transport system disclosed by Magee for the advantage of allowing the printing of articles with different thicknesses.

With respect to claim 3, Coudray et al. discloses a reference surface 35 which faces the lifting mechanism such that the mailpiece is urged against it in the printing area (col. 6, lines 5-8).

6. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Magee applied to claims 1, 4-6 and 8 above, and further in view of Wataya et al.

Magee discloses the claimed double belt transport system except for the velocity measurement mechanism. However Wataya et al. teaches a speed detector 1 which measures the speed of belt 54. It would have been obvious to combine the teaching of Wataya et al. with the transport system disclosed by Magee for the advantage of synchronizing the registration of different colors that are being printed.

7. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Coudray et al. as applied to claims 9-16 and 18-20 above, and further in view of Wataya et al.

Coudray et al. discloses the claimed printer except for the velocity measurement mechanism. However Wataya et al. teaches a speed detector 1 which measures the speed of belt 54. It would have been obvious to combine the teaching of Wataya et al. with the printer disclosed by Coudray et al. for the advantage of synchronizing the registration of different colors that are being printed.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 3/6/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive of any error in the above rejection.

Applicant's arguments do not comply with 37 CFR 1.111(c) because they do not clearly point out the patentable novelty which he or she thinks the claims present in view of the state of the art disclosed by the references cited or the objections made. Further, they do not show how the amendments avoid such references or objections.

Applicant has simply recited large portions of the Magee reference and large portions of each of claim 1, and then states that Magee does not disclose or anticipate the claimed invention.

Applicant has responded to the rejection of claims 9 and 11 in a similar manner.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include "a wedge-shaped gap resulting in a soft ingest nip." It appears, however, that Magee does in fact disclose this feature. Applicant's attention is invited to Figure 2 of Magee. In this Figure at the end of the lead line to the right of reference numeral "32," a wedge shaped soft ingest nip is shown. The distance between the belts 18a and 16a gradually decreases between the pulleys 24 and 28 thus forming a wedge shape. Since the

belts 18a and 16a are arranged in this to gradually apply pressure to the item being transported the nip is considered a “soft” nip.

With respect to the Coudray reference as applied to claims 9 and 11, applicant’s attention is invited to Figure 4 of Coudray which shows a wedge shaped gap between the belts 9 and 10 and between rollers 18 and 19. This arrangement also provides a soft nip as mentioned above with respect to claim 1.

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dan Colilla whose telephone number is (703) 308-2259. The examiner can normally be reached M-F, 8:30-5:30. Faxes regarding this application can be sent to (703) 746-4405.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Hirshfeld can be reached at (703)305-6619. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.



Dan Colilla
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2854

May 14, 2003